



U.S. Embassy Doha, Qatar

March 2020

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In February 2020, a Department grantee organization agreed to pay more than \$1.3 million in salary costs that were mischarged to federally sponsored grants. A university receiving funds found that a professor misreported time spent working on a Department grant as well as several grants for another agency. The university voluntarily disclosed this fact and agreed to pay the Department for unsupported charges related to the Department's grant funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

In February 2020, the Department suspended and proposed the debarment of a former contractor employee for theft. The former contractor was implementing two Department cooperative agreements to help local governments carry out legislative functions more effectively and prepare for upcoming local and national elections. OIG and company investigators determined the employee stole approximately \$172,000 from a company bank account. The individual had signatory authority over the account and withdrew the funds without authorization and later tried to conceal the withdrawal by creating fictitious bank statements.

In February 2020, a [former Department contracting officer \(CO\) was sentenced](#) to 87 months of imprisonment followed by 3 years supervised release, a \$25,000 fine, and a \$1,300 special assessment. In October 2019, [a jury convicted the CO](#) on 13 counts of conspiracy, bribery, honest services wire fraud, and making false statements. Before the [CO's indictment in April 2019](#), OIG and FBI special agents determined that from November 2012 to early 2017, the CO and the owner of a Turkish construction firm allegedly engaged in a bribery and procurement fraud scheme in which the CO received at least \$239,300 in cash payments from the business owner. In return, the CO allegedly supervised multimillion-dollar construction contracts awarded to the owner's business partners. The CO allegedly concealed the unlawful relationship by making false statements on financial disclosure forms and during his background reinvestigation.

RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS

as of February 28, 2020

1,098

Open
Recommendations

53

Recommendations
Closed During February

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The CO's security clearance was suspended.

In summer 2019, OIG briefed the Department on its findings about the PEPFAR program. As a result, the Department took early action to update its PEPFAR program guidance for 2020. Because of the Department's early action, OIG closed two recommendations at the time of [report issuance in February 2020](#).

In response to a 2017 [audit of fee-setting methodology](#), the Bureau of Consular Affairs developed procedures to better manage its carry forward balances of consular fees. The procedures identify minimum and maximum carry forward amounts and establish a methodology to annually review the carry forward balance and to use that balance in future periods. This reduces the risk of either excessive revenue or funding shortfalls.

In response to a 2019 [report on cost management of Embassy Air](#), the Aviation Governing Board developed and implemented procedures to routinely review Embassy Air-Afghanistan and Embassy Air-Iraq services, assets, and cost effectiveness. The new procedures included methodologies for assessing and adjusting the number of flights and aviation assets needed in each country.

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

Consulate General Perth's Centralized Program Improved Workstation Deployment (*Inspection of Embassy Canberra and Constituent Posts, Australia, ISP-I-20-07*)

Consulate General Perth's Information Systems Center centralized the management and configuration of its operating systems, applications, and user settings (also known as Group Policy management) in an Active Directory environment. Use of the Group Policy management console facilitated rapid deployment of workstation configuration updates to keep the consulate general current with Department standards. The console provides administrators with a streamlined dashboard-style view of all the assets under their control and combines the functionality of multiple tools, allowing administrators to configure changes more quickly and consistently. As a result, Information Systems Center staff were able to maintain up-to-date systems configurations, which contributed to the consulate general's high compliance ratings against the Department's standards. The consulate general, on several occasions, had the top rating in the Department.

NEW WORK STARTED

- Audit of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations Approach to Identifying and Communicating Construction Project Risks, Best Practices, and Lessons Learned
- Audit of the Department of State's Post Security Program Review Process

REPORTS ISSUED

- *Lead Inspector General for Operation Inherent Resolve | Quarterly Report to the United States Congress | October 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019 (February 4, 2020)*

- *Classified Inspection of Embassy Canberra and Constituent Posts, Australia (ISP-S-20-07)**
- *Lead Inspector General for East Africa and North and West Africa Counterterrorism Operations | Quarterly Report to the United States Congress | October 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019 (February 11, 2020)*
- *Lead Inspector General for Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines | Quarterly Report to the United States Congress | October 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019 (February 12, 2020)*
- *Audit of the Department of State's Coordination and Oversight of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (AUD-SI-20-17)*
- *Lead Inspector General for Operation Yukon Journey | Quarterly Report to the United States Congress | October 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019 (February 19, 2020)**
- *Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel | Quarterly Report to the United States Congress | October 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019 (February 19, 2020)*
- *Inspection of Embassy Canberra and Constituent Posts, Australia (ISP-I-20-07)*
- *Independent Auditor's Report on the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, U.S. Section, FY 2019 Financial Statements (AUD-FM-20-22)*
- *Classified Inspection of Embassy Pretoria and Constituent Posts, South Africa (ISP-S-20-09)**
- *Review of Delays Encountered Constructing the New Embassy Compound in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan (AUD-MERO-20-20)*

**Report is classified or Sensitive But Unclassified*



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